Department of Energy

Ohio Field Office
Fernald Closure Project
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Springdale, Ohio 45246
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DOE-0165-05

Mr. James A. Saric, Remedial Project Director
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region V-SR-6J
77 West Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, Illinois 60604-3590

Mr. Tom Schneider, Project Manager
Ohio Environmental Protection Agency
401 E. 5th Street
Dayton, OH 45402-2911

Dear Mr. Saric and Mr. Schneider:

DISCOVERY AND REMOVAL OF A CONTAMINATED BILLBOARD STRUCTURE ALONG THE SOUTH ACCESS ROAD

Per your request, this letter is to document the recent discovery of a contaminated sign structure along the South Access Road in an uncontrolled area. This information will also be included in the Area 7 Support Areas Integrated Remedial Design Package and associated Certification Design Letter, as well as the Area 7 Certification Report.

On February 8, 2005 a Radiological Control Technician (RCT), who was providing radiological contamination monitoring support for a Demolition Crew that were removing the fence along the eastern side of the South Access Road, discovered significant radiological contamination on one of the three steel I-beams that were used to support a billboard adjacent to the South Access Road. Contamination levels were up to 180,000 dpm/100 cm^2 (beta-gamma) fixed. No removable contamination was discovered by the RCT on the I-beams or anywhere near the I-beams.

The steel I-beams were covered with multiple layers of paint with paint chips in the area (on the ground) exhibited no signs of contamination. The RCT also surveyed the soil, the concrete anchors, and the wood that he could reach on the sign and found no other indications of contamination. A removable contamination survey (smear) on the I-beams was also conducted with negative results.

In order to prevent spread of contamination in an uncontrolled area, the sign has been dismantled and the I-beams along with their associated concrete anchors pulled from the ground on February 15, 2005. The entire structure was then placed in a roll-off box and transported to a staging area within the Former Production Area where the I-beams were sized reduced to meet On-Site Disposal Facility (OSDF) size criteria. This material will be sent to the OSDF for disposition along with other Category 2 materials.

As part of the Soil Characterization Program, real-time measurements using high-purity germanium detectors were collected over each of the three holes where the posts stood. The center posthole exhibited an elevated level of thorium-232 only, which was at a concentration of 3.92 picoCuries per gram (pCi/g). This value was confirmed with a physical sample taken from the bottom of the same hole with a result of 3.78 pCi/g of thorium-232. This is a level above two times the final remediation level and therefore needs to be excavated per the Sitewide Excavation Plan.

With your concurrence, DOE will excavate this contaminated soil immediately, controlling the excavation with the use of real-time measurement systems. Once the real-time data demonstrates that the contamination has been removed, physical samples will be collected to confirm the removal is complete. The data from the physical samples will be used in conjunction with the future certification data for that area. As this excavation is adjacent to the South Access Road, it will be backfilled with clean material from the OSDF Borrow Area based on the real-time results.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Johnny Reising at (513) 648-3139.

Sincerely,

Johnny Reising

for William J. Taylor
Director

cc:
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